

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 remain pending in the above-identified application and stand ready for further action on the merits.

The following comments are presented in part, to respond to the Examiner's comments as set forth in the Examiner's Advisory Action of June 27, 2007.

Applicants' Arguments Presented in the Previous Response

As a dehydration method, Kusano et al. mentions centrifugation as well as mechanical compression. However, Kusano et al. states that the preferred dehydration method is mechanical compression, which has been the *de facto* standard dehydration method in conventional techniques for producing dried porous crumbs.

On the other hand, in the method of the present invention, the dehydration is performed by any one of the specific methods recited in claim 2, which are different from mechanical compression.

The specific methods include centrifugation, which, however, should be done under the specific conditions recited in amended claim 2.

Kusano et al. which favor mechanical compression have, of course, no teaching or suggestion about the specific conditions for centrifugation.

Examiner's Opinion in the Advisory Action

In the Advisory Action, the Examiner asserts as follows:

"Insofar as the applicants arguments regarding the production claims, it appears that the centrifugal dehydration is not a critical limitation to obtain the product with the claimed parameters as the applicants own specification discloses, for example, gravity dehydration equally effective and all of the comparative results address different process steps. Thus, it is still reasonable believed that the product disclosed in the reference inherently exhibit the claimed properties."

As apparent from the above, our position is that, when the dehydration in the method of the present invention is performed by centrifugation, the centrifugation needs to be performed under specific conditions, whereas the Examiner asserts to the effect that the use of centrifugation in the present invention is obvious. The Examiner points out that the crumbs of the present invention are obtained even when the dehydration is performed by gravity dehydration in the Examples of the present application. However, this is irrelevant since Kusano et al. do not disclose the gravity dehydration.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the remarks presented herein, the Examiner is respectfully requested to issue a Notice of Allowance clearly indicating that each of pending claims 1-7 are allowed and patentable under the provisions of Title 35 of the United States Code.

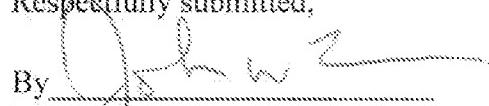
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John W. Bailey (Reg. No. 32,881) at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 16, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By


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